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REPORTS *of the* OFFICIAL DELEGATES *from* ENGLAND *at the*
MEETING *of the* INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL CONGRESS,
BERLIN, *September, 1863.*

[Continued from p. 419, vol. xxvi.]

3. MR. VALPY'S REPORT.

HAVING been deputed to attend this meeting of the Congress, as one of the delegates from England, by the President of the Board of Trade, the Minister who received the Congress, upon the part of the Government, in London, I beg to offer the following remarks upon the progress made in some branches of the official statistics of the United Kingdom since the last meeting of the Congress.

Honoured as I was, in conjunction with my colleagues Dr. Farr and Mr. Hammick, upon the occasion of the last meeting of the Congress, by personal communication with the Prince Consort, I cannot but allude to the loss which I feel the Congress and the science of statistics have experienced in the lamented death of His Royal Highness.

Referring, in the first place, to the statistics published in my own department, I have to report that continued attention has been given to the several returns prepared for Parliament, with the view of increasing their usefulness as sources of information, and making them more valuable as statistical records.

The statistics which are now prepared and published by the Board of Trade afford very comprehensive information with respect to the foreign trade and navigation of the country, and exhibit the principal results of the separate departmental returns relating to finance, education, pauperism, crime, the movement of the population, and other subjects of national interest. The full details for these subjects are published in the reports of the separate departments.

Copies of the publications of the statistical department are regularly forwarded to each foreign Government and to the principal statistical departments in each country.

The publications of the statistical department of the Board of Trade now comprise the following documents:—

Annual Statement of Trade and Navigation.

Monthly Accounts of Trade and Navigation.

Statistical Abstract.

Miscellaneous Statistics.

Colonial Statistics.

Foreign Statistics.

Statistics of Changes in Foreign Tariffs.

With respect to the chief record of the commerce of the United Kingdom, *The Annual Statement*, it may be mentioned that the specifications of the articles of import and export have been recently revised in order to render them more in accordance with the present state of British trade with foreign countries.

With reference to the value of the trade between individual countries, as stated in their respective returns, considerable differences are still to be met with.

It will be in the recollection of the Congress that this subject was brought before it at the last meeting by Mr. Messenger, one of the principal officers of customs in London. There are circumstances which will always prevent a complete correspondence in the accounts of two countries of the trade carried on between them; but the variations which at present exist are of sufficient importance to render this subject deserving of the further attention of the Congress and of the official delegates connected with departments which publish commercial statistics.

An alteration which will be made in the form of the import account in the "Annual Statement" of the commerce of the United Kingdom for the year 1862 may be mentioned as illustrative of the changes effected in the British system of trade.

In consequence of the small number of articles now subject to import duty by the tariff of the United Kingdom, the columns hitherto given to indicate the rates of duty and the amount of duty received upon the several articles of import are generally but so much blank paper in the pages of the account of imports. A saving of space in the volume will now be effected by dividing the articles of import into two classes, of duty free and duty paying goods. The latter class, consisting of not more than about twenty separate kinds of articles, will only require the specification of the rates and amount of duty.

In the last number of the "Statistical Abstract," some new tables have been added, and there is a fuller specification of the articles of import and export. In one of the new tables, the estimated and actual amounts of the public revenue and expenditure are given, and the comparison between the estimates and the actual results affords a proof of the careful manner in which the financial estimates are prepared for Parliament. The aggregate revenue of the United Kingdom has increased notwithstanding the large reductions in some branches of taxation.

You will observe in Table IV in the "Statistical Abstract" that, between the years 1848 and 1862, customs' duties were repealed or reduced, involving an estimated loss of revenue of more than 6 millions sterling; and yet the customs' revenue amounted to 24 millions sterling in 1862, against 22½ millions in 1848.

An important fiscal reform was effected in 1861 by the repeal of the excise duty upon paper made in the United Kingdom. The duty amounted to $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per pound weight and produced a revenue of 1,350,000*l.* sterling.

The excise regulations operated injuriously upon the paper manufacture, and the price of paper was enhanced both by the excise duty and the import duty upon foreign paper. Both duties have been abolished, and the English markets are now free for the sale of English and foreign paper upon equal terms.

Rags and other raw materials for the manufacture of paper can also be imported and exported free of duty. The supply of paper is not unimportant in connection with statistical publications, and the condition of that trade is deserving of attention in every country.

I wish particularly to invite the attention of the Congress to the publication of *Statistical Abstracts*, containing the principal results of national statistics. A great step would be made towards obtaining comparative international statistics if such a document were compiled and published in each country. In France and Austria, statistical abstracts have already appeared, and it is to be hoped that they will soon be adopted in other countries.

The utility of publishing the principal results of the statistics of all countries upon a uniform plan was recognized by the Congress at the meeting in London. But no plan, at that time, was agreed upon, as it appeared that the subject was engaging the attention of our distinguished colleague M. Quételet. The Congress has recommended, for the sake of facilitating the preparation of comparative statistics, that in some of the statistical publications of countries not using the metrical system of weights and measures additional columns should be introduced to show results according to that standard. But it is doubtful whether a system of publishing figures not in accordance with the national system of weights and measures, could be adopted to an extent that would be of any value for international statistics. It is not the trouble of converting weights or measures from one system into another that seriously interferes with the compilation of tables of international statistics, but the absence of corresponding details in statistical publications. With similar items of information for all countries, it would not be difficult to frame tables of international statistics according to the system of money, weights, and measures in force in any one country, notwithstanding the different systems in which the original figures were expressed.

A comparative abstract of the principal statistics of countries upon the Continent of Europe has been attempted in parts vii and viii of the "Statistical Tables" relating to foreign countries, published by the Board of Trade. I have placed a separate copy of

this abstract in the collection of papers presented to the Congress, and also in the hands of some of the official delegates. The particulars which it was the endeavour to state for each country were the area, population, births, deaths, marriages, the total revenue and expenditure, the public debt, mercantile shipping, national and foreign vessels engaged in the foreign trade, and the value of the total imports and exports. A reference to the table will show how many of these particulars can be gathered from the published statistics of the several countries.

Whilst referring to international statistics, I may mention that the statistical department of the Board of Trade is preparing a new parliamentary return which will show for each article the different classifications as well as the different rates of duty adopted in the several tariffs. As the enumeration of articles of import in the commercial returns of different countries depends very much upon the classifications adopted in the tariffs, a return showing the different manner in which an article is classified for the levying of duty in different tariffs will not be devoid of statistical interest.

The trade returns, as well as the finance returns of the United Kingdom, exhibit the success of our commercial policy. The value of the total imports of merchandise was 226 *millions* sterling in 1862, against 152 *millions* in 1854, when the real value was first ascertained.

The value of the exports of British produce increased from 71 *millions* so recently as in 1850 to 136 *millions* in 1860. In consequence of the civil war in America, the value fell from 136 *millions* in 1860 to 125 *millions* in 1861 and to 124 *millions* in 1862, a decrease of less than 10 per cent.

The *quantities* of cotton yarn exported fell from 197 *million lbs.* in 1860 to 93 *million lbs.* in 1862. The *value* of cotton yarn exported decreased from 10 *millions* sterling in 1860 to 6 *millions* in 1862.

The exports of cotton piece goods fell, as regards *quantity*, from 2,766 *million yards* in 1860 to 1,681 *million yards* in 1862; and as regards *value*, from 42 *millions* sterling in 1860 to 30½ *millions* in 1862.

Gentlemen, you will appreciate the importance of the cotton manufacture in the United Kingdom before the war in America, when I remind you that *six or seven hundred thousand persons* were directly engaged in it; that it employed an estimated capital of 200 *millions* sterling; and that it contributed from 50 to 60 *millions* to the annual exports.

In the volume of *Miscellaneous Statistics*, published by the Board of Trade, some information has been collected upon two of the subjects discussed by the Congress at its last meeting—prices and rates of wages. It has not been practicable, as yet, to follow the

elaborate suggestions of the Congress upon those branches of statistics, but information has been collected which, it is hoped, may prove to be statistically useful and interesting. The prices paid for various articles by the army and navy departments, and some public institutions, are given. The rates of wages paid in several of the great branches of industry have been collected by the assistance of the principal chambers of commerce. These statistics, although not so complete as it is to be hoped they will eventually be made, have excited a good deal of interest.

The rates of agricultural wages in each county of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland have been collected by the Government. Statistics of the prices of the chief articles of consumption, and of the remuneration of labour in the various branches of employment, are of great social and economic value.

Dr. Farr has already informed the Congress that the collection of agricultural statistics has not been commenced in England nor resumed in Scotland. Ireland is a happy exception in this respect to the other divisions of the kingdom. The Registrar-General in Dublin, who superintends this branch of the statistics of Ireland, has just been able to announce a fact of considerable public importance with respect to the growth of flax. It appears that in 1863, as compared with 1862, there was an increase of no less than 64,000 *acres* in the extent of land cultivated with flax in Ireland. A larger production of a raw material for spinning is a highly important fact at the present time.

It is believed to be the feeling of the agriculturists in England, as a class, that the Government has no right to call upon them for information respecting their farming operations. But as a matter of principle it does not appear to be any more objectionable to require the farmer to give information as to his cultivation of the land than to oblige the merchant to register his commercial transactions with foreign countries.

Prejudices are, however, happily removed in the course of time by the current of public opinion, and the present state of ignorance as to the agricultural resources of the United Kingdom cannot continue. The recommendations of the Congress on this subject will have an influence in England.

The "Judicial Statistics for England and Wales," published by the Home Department, have been perfected since the last Congress, and they now afford very useful and interesting information respecting the proceedings of our courts of criminal and civil law. Differences in the laws have prevented an assimilation of this branch of our statistics for the three divisions of the kingdom, but progress is being made towards this important object.

With respect to meteorological observations in England, Admiral

Fitzroy reports that continued progress has been made in the collection of information for which his department was instituted, and that a considerable advance has been made in the practical application of meteorology to every day use.

I trust that the reports of the English delegates will be satisfactory to the Congress.

Our colleague from Sweden, Dr. Berg, has reminded us that much progress in the collection and improvement of official statistics cannot be effected in the course of a few years only. The Congress must not be disappointed at the absence of speedy and striking results to its labours. It is not always the most conspicuous effects that are the most valuable or the most lasting. The Congress is certainly doing good service to all nations. The periodical meetings which we are invited to hold in the capital cities, where the members are received with royal and general kindness, must exercise a great and favourable influence upon public opinion in regard to national statistics.

The opportunity afforded by the Congress for the meeting of public officers and gentlemen interested in statistics from so many countries is productive of much advantage. The circle of our friends is enlarged, and, speaking as an official delegate, I can say that our means of usefulness at home are increased, and our efforts for improvement are much encouraged by the cordial personal intercourse between the members of the Congress.

We must also remember, Gentlemen, that the labours of the Congress are not unrecorded, and if the recommendations which are embodied and preserved in the printed reports are fully carried into effect, they will always afford a most useful guide to all workers in the field of statistics.

Upon the present occasion I think we have every reason to acknowledge our gracious reception by His Majesty the King of Prussia, to congratulate ourselves upon the honour conferred upon us by the Count d'Eulenburg in taking the chair, and to express our best thanks to Dr. Engel for his labours on our behalf.
